

ABBEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL



MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting held on Thursday, 17th December 2020 at 7.30pm, held Online

Present: Cllrs D. Simpson (in the Chair), K. Ryan, J. Spragg, A. Evans. Ward Cllr R. Exon. No residents
Clerk: J. Vischer.

1. **Apologies** – Ward Cllr R. Bradburn. These were accepted.
2. **Public Open Forum** - None
3. **Declarations of Interest** in any of the agenda items – None.
4. **Approval of previous Minutes and any Matters Arising** not covered below
 - 4.1. **Minutes** of the November Meeting previously circulated, were unanimously approved. Proposer Cllr Ryan, seconder Cllr Spragg.
 - 4.2. **Matters Arising** – None.
5. **Resignation of Cllr Galbraith** - on 2nd December Cllr Galbraith had offered his resignation. Councillors noted that Cllr Galbraith had joined Abbey Hill Parish Council (AHPC) in April 2014 and had proved a fount of knowledge on many technical and contractual matters. He had always pushed AHPC issues forward with great enthusiasm and perseverance. Councillors thanked him for his excellent service to AHPC.
 - 5.1. Acting Chair - Cllr Simpson agreed to take on the role of Acting Chair until the May 2021 Annual Meeting. It was further agreed to nominate as Acting Vice Chair Cllr Ryan. He accepted the role. Proposer Cllr Evans, seconder Cllr Spragg.
 - 5.2. Vacancy - the resulting vacancy had been notified to Milton Keynes Council (MKC). The Clerk would shortly display an official Notice on the website and notice board. Councillors agreed to seek nominations. **CLK**
6. **Parking Enforcement Officer (shared)** - No further information had been received. The Clerk had circulated the online survey to invite responses from councillors on the sort of service they were seeking, hours of employment etc. Ward Cllr Exon pointed out that many parishes were in the same situation *viz* wishing to only make use of an officer at peak times, often school times, for only a few hours per week. Councillors agreed to send comments and responses to the survey to the Clerk before the Christmas break (next Thursday). **CLLRS/CLK**
7. **Communications**
 - 7.1. **New Website** - Cllr Evans had compiled a 'list of fixes' for the draft website from councillors comments and sent it to the web designers. A newer version was awaited.
 - 7.2. **Social Media** - Cllr Galbraith had relinquished his admin role on AHPC Facebook page (admin were now Cllrs Ryan and Spragg, and the Clerk). Cllr Ryan proposed that all feeds to the Friends of TMA Facebook page be sent from here and not posted by the named individuals, in order to highlight the AHPC page. This was agreed. It was noted that there were no serious estate concerns being shared amongst users.
 - 7.3. **WhatsApp group** - the resignation of Cllr Galbraith raised the issue of the 'admin' of this group. Clerk to investigate.
8. **Environment**
 - 8.1. **Christmas Tree Lights** - The contractor had visited only to state that the ground was too soft for their 'cherry-picker' and that with the new railing they could not gain access. They also pointed out that MK Council was no longer permitting the overhead cable connections to streetlights. The Clerk contacted MK Highways regrading the connection rules and was told that a 'work around' would be

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allowed. Following a meeting on-site with the MKC officer responsible two of the globe lights were switched on; and following several phonecalls to the contractor it had been agreed that the Christmas Tree lights would be fitted and connected using ladders etc. [*post meeting note*: this was carried out on Monday 21st December].

8.1.1. Streetlight connection - councillors agreed to invest in the new connection: a dedicated 'lights' pillar, and underground culvert and cable to the Christmas Tree. The Clerk was instructed to obtain a quotation from MKC to have this work carried out before financial year end [*post meeting note*: MKC had informed the Clerk that these new type connections would not be installed until April at the earliest]

8.1.2. Christmas Tree - councillors agreed to replacing the existing tree with a true 'Christmas tree' - e.g. Norway Spruce. Clerk to contact tree officer for information and advice and make enquiries as to costs of a ten-foot mature tree.

CLK

8.2. Fault/Project Log, including Devolved Landscape Services - the Log was gone through. There are 21 ongoing issues.

8.2.1. Post-and-rail - The Clerk reported that a commencement date had been given for the installation works: 21st December 2020.

8.2.2. Downland Field - the contact officer had finally responded on 30th November making the following salient points: "housing are currently reviewing the pipeline of MKC owned sites.... and are looking at a proposal for a small number of dwellings on the western side of the field...." this will revolve around "...the Housing Revenue Account plan for the next few years. To be approved in February Cabinet." Ward Cllr Exon added that there were one or two smaller sites also being considered and that ward councillors would be objecting to any of the green spaces being taken over for development. He promised to pass on the relevant housing 'list' to inform AHPC. **WdCllr**

8.2.3. Grass cutting - A total of four extra cuts had been applied to Two Mile Ash over the season (a maximum of five had been ordered by AHPC). The invoice was awaited.

8.2.4. Wymbush: outstanding over-grown shrubs outside VW - the Clerk had brought the issue up at the monthly Third Option meeting and had ascertained that a metre-strip along the redway belonged to MKC but the bulk of the 'verge' was the responsibility of VW. The complaint had caused MKC to write to VW instructing them to comply. The Clerk had added AHPC's weight to the complaint by writing direct to the company. [*post meeting note*: the beds were heavily pruned back both on Gt Monks St and the city centre link redway by 19th December]

8.2.5. Deteriorating dog bin - the Clerk had issued an instruction to replace the bin to the contractor [*post meeting note*: this had been completed by 19th December]

8.2.6. WEA new underpass landscaping - It was agreed to formally record that AHPC deems the unfinished landscaped works and the overly steep gradient where soil is being washed down on the TMA side of the underpass, unacceptable. This was reported to the relevant MKC departments in October 2020. Furthermore, councillors noted the Clerk's report that MKC Landscaping Department officers had not 'accepted' the steep gradient landscaping on the TMA side of the new underpass, but the contract was the responsibility of the Highways Department.

8.2.7. Dangerous redway surface - The redway at the top of the park, near 9 High Street, is in a very bad state with gaps, cracks and holes. Reported in October 2020 (not for the first time) MKC deems it not serious enough to repair. It was agreed to formally record that AHPC disagrees and this forms a true hazard.

9. Finance

9.1. Payments for authorisation & Balances - since the November meeting:

Vision ICT (website hosting annual) £150.00; Clerk's salary (period 09) £701.80; Clerk's admin/ expenses (November) £23.80; HMRC (PAYE 3rdQtr) £243.82.

These payments were approved unanimously - proposer Cllr Simpson, seconder Cllr Ryan.

Available funds 30th November 2020: £95,976 (plus reserves £38,442).

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9.2. Preliminary Budget Considerations - It was broadly agreed that operating expenditure may be increased by 2 to 3% in line with the usual budget cycle. Capital spend on Projects: it was agreed to seek a quotation from MKC Highways department for the next phase of post and rail work. It was agreed that the next stretch of railings would be the run from the Fish & Chip Shop up the High St. to the crossing opposite the church. **CLK**

10. Planning Applications

10.1. Previous

20/02854/FUL 5 Haslow Court Two Mile Ash, Two storey side extension, single storey rear extension, garage extension and new front balcony. *Pending*

20/02575/CLUP 18 Potters Lane Kiln Farm, Certificate of lawfulness for the Long-standing Car Repairs use of premises on general industrial/business estate. *Pending*

20/02888/FUL 1 Astlethorpe Two Mile Ash, proposed two storey side extension. *Pending*

20/02964/CLUP 13 Farinton Two Mile Ash, Certificate of Lawfulness for the Loft conversion with dormer extension to rear roofslope and rooflights to front roofslope. *Awaiting Decision*

20/02975/CLUP 2 Atherstone Court Two Mile Ash, Certificate of Lawfulness for the single-storey side extension with roof lights. *Pending*

10.2. New

since publication of the agenda: 20/03267/FUL 24 Milesmere Two Mile Ash, Single storey side extension, amendments to fenestrations, partial smooth white render finish to front elevations. No objections/comments.

11. Grants and Correspondence

11.1. No grant applications.

11.2. Correspondence (other than email) - None

12. Other Meetings and New Matters (WEA; Parishes Forum; Community Annexe, Community Garden) - Nothing to report

13. Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 21st January 2021. To be held online at 7.30pm.

The meeting closed at 9.10pm.

Signed

date